

Mr. Speaker, I think that sometimes when we begin to debate an issue that is before us, it is always important to ask ourselves why we are really here. And if there is any foundational purpose for this Congress, it is to protect the innocent in humanity. Sometimes we complicate that greatly. Perhaps one of our greatest abilities as human beings is to hide from something that we would rather not face, and I think that that is indeed the situation that we face today.

The Unborn Victims of Violence Act has been distorted in the minds of many people. It has been distorted in the speeches that have been made from this well to a great degree. I find that people on both sides of the aisle, on my side of the aisle, they try to say, well, this has nothing to do with abortion; and that is true. On the other side of the aisle they try to say, well, this is just a disguised pro-life bill. In a sense, both of those things are true, and I think it is time for us to face it directly.

The truth is, this bill is not about abortion. But the fact is, if it were not for abortion on demand, we would not even be debating this bill. We would not even be questioning whether or not this was important. Because most of the opposition to this bill comes from those who try very hard, and I understand their problem, I understand their difficulty; they try very hard to put this bill aside as a nonserious issue because it makes them face the reality of the humanness of this little unborn baby child. And that is a difficult thing to face, because, after all, when we consider America's history since *Roe v. Wade*, we have taken the lives of 10,000 times as many babies as people who died on 9/11.

So I understand the hesitation to face the reality here; but sometimes, there has to come a point in all of our lives where we just put aside those things that we know in our hearts are not true and embrace what is obviously a self-evident truth.

The fact is that there really are two victims in this situation. When a mother is assaulted and her child is killed, there are two victims, and I speak to some degree from personal experience.

I used to live in Albany, Kentucky, many years ago, and this is far before such a bill like this was even contemplated. There was a situation where a man had, with his bare hands, killed an unborn child of a mother on the streets of Monticello, Kentucky, and try as they might, the prosecutors had a great difficulty in being able to bring the right kind of charge against this person.

They brought a charge of manslaughter, but again, *Roe v. Wade* was mentioned as a defense. They said, well, there is no child here. Everyone in the court, everyone connected to the case knew there was a child, and I would suggest to my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, that the mother knew there was a child, and perhaps as tragic as it was that this child died in the streets alone, I do not think anyone felt the reality and the horror and the tragedy more than that mother. For us here in Congress to say to her that her child was not real, that her grief was not real, is just beyond description, in my opinion.

Mr. Speaker, it is time that we recognize the truth here. It is time we all asked the real question, and that is, is there really a baby here? Mr. Speaker, an honest look at the truth reflects the unavoidable reality that there is a child, and if there is a child, how can those of us in this body, whose primary, principal purpose for being here is to protect the innocent, how can we ignore that fact?

I just hope, Mr. Speaker, that people on both sides of the aisle will simply recognize the reality of the humanness of the child and the great mourning of a mother that loses that child to someone that would deliberately take that child's life or take that child's life incidentally to trying to assault her. It is time we stood up and did what was right, Mr. Speaker, and I hope that we will do that.

I just want to remind all of us that if we do not have the courage to protect the innocent, in the final analysis, no matter how erudite we are, we will never really find the true courage to protect that kind of liberty for anyone, and I pray that we respond in that manner.